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TS #102328

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

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21 November 1955

DRAFT MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: "Progress Report on Proposed Policy of the United States
on the Question of Disarmament - Volume V"

Introduction

1. For convenience of reference we propose to comment on the Stassen paper section by section, but we suggest that the following questions, which we shall deal with at appropriate places in the commentary, are the principal ones the DCI will wish to consider in framing his views on this paper:

- a) What would be the consequences for intelligence of the arms inspection system proposed?
- b) Would the system be effective in achieving its stated purposes, in particular, "to provide against the possibility of great surprise attack?"
- c) Would the USSR be likely to accept the proposal?
- d) Would the proposal, even if rejected by the USSR, help to retain the initiative for the US in the propaganda contest being waged around the issue of disarmament?

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Section I

2. This is mainly a quotation of Stassen's terms of reference contained in NSC Action 1419 and a listing of the formal steps he took to implement the directive. It requires no comment.

Section II

3. This section is the heart of the whole document. Its principal purpose is to elaborate the specifics of the President's air inspection proposal and to outline in addition a system of ground inspection. On its specific provisions we have the following comments:

- a) The outline of the inspection plan is in very sketchy form and a great many more details would be needed to judge its technical effectiveness to achieve its intended purposes. Such a judgement should in any case have to be made by technical experts, but some of the additional information they would require is evident even to the non-expert. For example, there is no mention of what military information ("blueprints") would be exchanged. Further, there is mention of 280 inspection posts but no mention of where these would be located. Would they be at the sites of all major Soviet military installations? What would be the rights of the inspectors to have access to such installations? Would all objects of inspection

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be specified or would inspectors have complete freedom of access to all installations not specifically excluded, such as nuclear plants? In general terms, the mere number of posts and inspectors (20,000 to 30,000) seems adequate to insure effective coverage, but the objects of inspection, the rights of access, the means of verification and the extent and reliability of the communications provided for the inspectors need to be spelled out before the effectiveness of the scheme can be judged and before it can provide the basis of serious negotiation.

- b) There is no specific provision for inspection in Communist China. Presumably this would be worked out under Paragraph F. The "states associated with the US" which would be responsible for the program in China perhaps ought to be named and, in view of the possibilities for evasion which the extensive territory of China could provide for the USSR, there probably ought to be some mention of the number of posts and personnel which would be assigned there. (The possibility of Soviet evasion by use of Chinese territory was given particular mention in NIE 11-11-55.)*

* "Some Implications of a System of International Armaments Inspection," 30 August 1955; see especially para. 25.

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- c) Paras B. 9, 10 - The reliability of information on various specified aspects of economic activity provided for in these paragraphs would depend very largely on the accuracy of the data which the USSR itself provided. While some cross-checking to test the consistency of large bodies of economic data would be possible, the "spot-check verification" envisaged would have to be of frequent periodicity at a large number of key points. Here again, as under a) above, more details and the judgment of technical efforts are required.

4. By way of general comment on this section the first two of the questions referred to in Paragraph 1 above are relevant:

- a) Consequences for intelligence of the proposed inspection scheme - The rule we have used in the past in estimating the consequences of reciprocal US-USSR disclosures of information accompanied by inspection appears to apply in full measure to the program proposed. It is that, because the USSR now has vastly greater intelligence information on the US than the US has on the USSR, the net gains resulting from verified disclosure would all be on the side of the US. This might not be true if the system required the US to make disclosures of advanced weapon types or of

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weapons production processes (including nuclear) which the USSR did not possess. While the plan is not entirely clear on what is to be disclosed and inspected (see para. 3a above), we infer that the US would not be required to make such disclosures as would in effect erase its technological lead over the USSR. By and large, therefore, the US would come into possession of an enormous amount of new and reliable information on Soviet capabilities while the USSR, although certainly acquiring some new information and verifying some untested information it already possessed, would not profit in anything like the same degree. In short, the US would acquire for the first time a really adequate foundation for its intelligence on the USSR and the latter would at best achieve a marginal improvement in its intelligence on the US.

- b) Effectiveness of the system in preventing surprise attack
NIE 11-11-55 examined the adequacy of an inspection system to prevent surprise nuclear attack. It stated that it would be necessary at a minimum to account for either (1) existing nuclear weapons and their current production or (2) delivery vehicles and their current production, and in addition to maintain such surveillance over either

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of them as to render a surprise attack infeasible.

- (1) Nuclear Weapons - NIE 11-11-55 concluded that, even if inspection of nuclear weapons production facilities was undertaken, "The USSR could have concealed, or might accumulate by clandestine methods, the numbers and types of nuclear weapons required for a feasible attack on the US. Therefore, international inspection of nuclear weapons and fissionable materials alone could not provide assurance against the possibility of surprise attack." The Stassen proposal takes account of this judgment by simply omitting any requirement for disclosures in this field. It specifically excludes inspection of nuclear weapons stocks and internal inspection of nuclear production plants (Para II.B.11 - p. 5). It does, however, provide for control of future nuclear production by an international agency. (Para. VI. B. 4 - p. 9)
- (2) Delivery Vehicles - NIE 11-11-55 states: "Under present conditions, the USSR would almost certainly have to undertake certain detectable preparatory activities in order to launch a surprise nuclear attack on the US in a magnitude sufficient to deal a crippling blow. Preparations...which would be entailed in such an attack would almost certainly attract the attention of inspection agents before the attack could be launched." (Para 18) The estimate also states, however, that in future "the ability of inspectors to give warning

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would be reduced...by a reduction in the preparations required for an attack resulting from developments in weapons technology, delivery means, training, or logistic procedures." (Para 2) We believe that an inspection system on the scale outlined, if it provided for continuous observation of the essential Soviet military facilities and also for reliable communications (see 3a) above), would effectively exclude surprise attack given present Soviet capabilities.

The Stassen plan provides only for inspection, however. It would not prevent the development of future capabilities for surprise attack resulting from prolonged training to advance combat readiness or from the introduction of new weapons. It is entirely possible therefore that the USSR might gradually acquire forces capable of attacking without noticeable preparation. According to NIE 11-11-55, "Under these conditions, international inspection might provide warning of attack, though the warning might be little earlier than the actual launching of the attack itself." (Para 17) We believe ~~therefore~~ that the Stassen proposals, by failing to provide against the growth of future Soviet capabilities, would not guarantee the US against surprise attack under all future contingencies. To achieve this, there would have to be, in addition to

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inspection, agreed limitations, duly inspected and verified, on the activities and deployment of the Soviet Long-Range Air Force and on the development and possession of new weapons capable of being used for intercontinental attack. We conclude therefore that a system of the kind proposed would probably be effective in providing against the possibility of surprise attack at this time and probably for at least several years to come, but could not give such assurance for the indefinite future.

We believe that future assurance against nuclear surprise attack can be obtained only if in addition to a comprehensive and effective inspection system there is an actual denial, through arms reduction and limitation, of the capability to attack without noticeable preparations. On the subject of arms limitation and reduction the Stassen paper is inconclusive. It does suggest "modest initial reductions in conventional forces." (Para VI.B.3 - p.9) It also states that if the inspection system it describes is installed, "the US will contemplate a gradual equitable reduction on a reciprocal basis of nuclear weapons carrying capacity and of conventional forces..." (Para VI.E. - p. 10) Elsewhere, however, the paper says that a sound agreement for inspection would be "added to substantial sustained alert US military strength." (Para. V. C. -p. 8), implying that there is no intention to limit US capabilities, and reciprocally,

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those of the USSR. We believe that over the long pull genuine assurance against surprise nuclear attack could be obtained only if provisions for arms reduction and limitation, along with a sound inspection system, were made an integral part of a disarmament program.

Section III

5. The principle that the degree of dispersal of US facilities would determine the scale necessary for a successful initial attack, and therefore that greater dispersal would increase the likelihood of advance detection by inspectors, seems sound. Whether the present dispersal, in particular of the US retaliatory capability, is sufficient in the light of the inspection system proposed is a technical question we are unable to answer. The findings of the Net Evaluations Subcommittee would be relevant in this connection.

Section IV

6. The statement that the USSR is likely to have an ICBM within ten years is in accord with current estimates. The subject is currently being reviewed in connection with the preparation of NIE 11-12-55, but any change in the estimated date of this weapon's availability will make it earlier rather than later. 25X1X7 [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The statement that the ICBM could not be made ready in quantity without detection by the inspection system contemplated is supported by NIE 11-11-55. (See Para. 20.)

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Section V

7. The flat statement in Para A that "the outlook for future decades includes increasingly great dangers of a nuclear war" is an oversimplification which we do not think ought to appear in this paper. Our estimates have emphasized that despite the prospective increase in Soviet nuclear capabilities, US retaliatory capability will continue to have its deterrent effect, and therefore "the USSR will continue to try to avoid substantial risks of general war." (See NIE 100-5-55, "Implications of Growing Nuclear Capabilities for the Communist Bloc and the Free World," 14 June 55, Para. 31) The difficulty with the unqualified statement in the Stassen paper is that it appears to place the US under some compulsion to accept an inspection scheme as the only alternative to nuclear destruction.

Section VI

8. There is one important objective for US policy on disarmament which is omitted from Para.VI.A and which we think ought to be included, either in a separate category or at the head of the present list. This is that the US policy ought to be calculated to maintain the solidarity of US alliances. Thus far the Soviet line on disarmament has been devised primarily to sow divisions between the US and its partners. For the present, therefore, disarmament is more important as a field of political warfare maneuver than as a subject of serious negotiation, and US policy

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ought to take account of this. We suggest that there should be an objective stated as follows: "To handle the disarmament issue in such a fashion as to insure substantial unity with the principal allies of the US, and to obtain maximum support of the free world opinion."

9. Paras. B. 3 and 5 - By all odds the most important feature which the UK, French and Soviet proposals have in common is the provision for reduction to agreed force levels. Since the US under the proposed policy will accept only "modest initial reductions" and will only "contemplate" important reductions at a later stage, the area of possible "synthesis" is likely to cover relatively unimportant matters. This underlines the importance, discussed in another connection under 4 b)(2) above, of US policy thinking through at an early stage what it is prepared to do with respect to arms reduction and limitation.

10. Para. C - We question the desirability or necessity of the statement that the objectives listed in connection with this policy should be pursued "without subordination" to other objectives. In our Para. 8 a. above we have already suggested an addition to the list of objectives which in part makes such an implied priority less objectionable in our view. More important, however, we think that Para. VI C is incompatible with a provision in the terms of reference contained in NSC Action 1419. The latter states in Para. b (2), as quoted on p.2 of the Stassen paper, that the US should "concurrently make intensive efforts to resolve other major international issues". This language suggests what

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we believe is the right relationship between US objectives in the disarmament field proper and its other foreign policy objectives. On grounds of both history and logic, we do not think that the disarmament problem can be separated from the political and security problems which are after all the main cause of the arms race. US policy ought not therefore to give the disarmament issue the degree of priority implied in Para. VI. C. but should continue to relate this issue to a just settlement of other international problems, and indeed use disarmament negotiations where possible to further such settlements. The interrelationship between disarmament and political issues is in fact suggested in other parts of the paper, for example, in Para. VI. D. 3.

General Considerations

11. The following paragraphs are concerned with the general questions raised in Para. 1 above under c) and d). The scheme described in Sections II and VI could recommend itself as policy on two grounds: (a) that in addition to serving US interest it would be likely to win agreement from the USSR; or (b) that, while likely to be rejected by the USSR, it would nevertheless retain the initiative for the West on the disarmament issue, reinforce the unity of the Western alliance, and thus serve as a useful move in the continuous propaganda and diplomatic contest with the USSR.

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12. We believe that it can be predicted with almost complete certainty that the policy proposed is not one which could win agreement from the USSR. There are several reasons for this:

a) NIE 11-11-55 states that the Soviet leaders would probably conclude that there would be "no dangers to the stability of the Soviet regime arising out of such inspection which could not be overcome by techniques of control." (Para. 9) However, when faced with the prospect of a force of up to 30,000 free-roaming inspectors the Soviet leaders would probably believe that to expose their closed society to such extensive external influences would ultimately present serious problems and dangers. They might not fear a direct threat to their police control, but they would fear a penetration of alien influences which could compromise their traditional effort to hold Soviet society in isolation from the outside world.

b) The Soviet leaders would almost certainly believe that an inspection system which did not provide for dismantling the presently superior US nuclear capabilities would freeze the present situation into one of permanent inferiority for them. They would regard this situation as hazardous in view of the possibility that the US might at some time evade or denounce the agreement. More than likely the Soviet leaders would believe that the scheme was specifically designed to force this disadvantage upon them.

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- c) The Communists regard themselves as being involved in permanent conflict with the West. In this contest they almost certainly would not wish to deny themselves the option of employing whatever means, including force or the threat of force, might seem to them appropriate at any given stage.

We believe that the Soviet leaders are now genuinely concerned to avoid nuclear war with the US, but we also believe that they consider that they are able to avoid such a war without making the sacrifices indicated under a), b), and c) above.

13. Would the proposed scheme, even if rejected by the USSR, be acknowledged by world opinion to be a sincere effort to advance the cause of peace? On the whole, we believe the proposal would have this effect. It is an elaboration of the President's Summit proposal for aerial inspection, the reception of which by free world opinion was apparently generally favorable. It incorporates the ground inspection feature of the Soviet plan, and is responsive to one major Soviet criticism of the Summit proposal, that US overseas bases were not mentioned.

14. On the other hand, there are some omissions from the plan which would make it vulnerable to Soviet counter-propaganda. For example, the minimal emphasis placed upon arms reduction would constitute such a vulnerability. The impact which could be made on world opinion would be stronger if, while insisting upon an effective inspection system as an essential condition precedent, the US also was able to commit itself in

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principle to substantial reciprocal reductions once such an inspection system was in force.

15. This point is of particular importance since the scale of the inspection system proposed, the number of inspectors, and the elaborate organization required is likely to come as something of a surprise to world opinion. There is some danger that the US would be charged with setting impossible requirements in order to torpedo disarmament negotiations once and for all.

16. A further vulnerability to Soviet counter-propaganda is that the plan makes no mention of control over nuclear weapons other than in connection with a proposal to place future production of fissionable material under international control. The fear of nuclear weapons is basic in the preoccupation of world opinion with the disarmament issue. It can be stated that by agreeing to inspection of the means of delivery we are in effect controlling the use of nuclear weapons, but it is likely that Soviet propaganda would nevertheless make much of the absence of a specific control over the weapons themselves. To cover this vulnerability, it would be necessary to make a major information effort to establish the point that no reliable inspection and control can be applied to nuclear weapons themselves since there are no reliable techniques available to account for past production.

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